



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
OFFICE OF GOVERNOR DANIEL J. MCKEE

May 28, 2026

The Honorable Louis P. DiPalma, Chairman
Senate Committee on Finance
Rhode Island Senate
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

RE: S-3327 Relating to State Affairs and Government – Office of the Inspector General

Chair DiPalma and Members of the Senate Committee on Finance,

I support the concept of an independent inspector general to streamline efforts to investigate fraud, waste, and abuse and provide further transparency into how taxpayer dollars are managed. S-3327 makes progress toward that goal, but it requires amendments to ensure the inspector general has visibility into government operations across all branches, including actions related to public finances undertaken by the General Assembly.

As currently drafted, the legislation expressly excludes the legislative branch from the definition of “agency” and limits the inspector general’s jurisdiction solely to the executive branch. Excluding the branch of government that controls the power of the purse would leave a significant gap in the inspector general’s oversight authority and would not serve the best interests of Rhode Island taxpayers.

Other states, including Massachusetts and Delaware, have successfully established inspector general frameworks that provide oversight of legislative administrative and financial operations while respecting separation of powers principles.¹ Rhode Island can adopt a similar approach that provides meaningful oversight across all branches of government without interfering with core legislative functions.

More broadly, Rhode Island should continue pursuing structural reforms that improve fiscal oversight and transparency, including advancing my budget proposal to allow voters to decide whether to adopt a line-item veto constitutional amendment. Governors in 44 other states have

¹ Examples from neighboring states include Massachusetts, where Chapter 12A, §7 extends inspector general authority to “the general court” (the constitutional term for the Legislature), and Delaware, where 29 Del. C. § 9002E(5)(b) expressly includes the General Assembly for purposes of administrative operations and management of governmental resources, while exempting core legislative and constitutional functions under § 9002E(5)(c)(3).

some form of line-item veto authority, allowing them to reject unnecessary taxes and fees and increasing transparency in the budgeting process.

A line-item veto would help ensure affordability remains front and center in state government decisions. Rhode Island's current all-or-nothing system limits the ability to address individual provisions that unnecessarily raise costs for taxpayers. Allowing voters to decide this question would create a more balanced and accountable fiscal process focused on protecting Rhode Islanders from unnecessary cost increases over time. Rhode Islanders deserve the opportunity to vote on this question this November.

I stand ready to work with the General Assembly to advance these good-government reforms and give taxpayers a stronger voice through an independent inspector general and line-item veto.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Daniel J. McKee". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Daniel J. McKee
Governor

cc: The Honorable Frank A. Ciccone III, Senate Majority Leader
Stephen Whitney, Senate Fiscal Advisor
Kristen Silvia, Director of Legislation and Deputy Chief of Staff